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ABSTRACT

The elementary school experiences of 418 entering education majors at the University of New Mexico were investigated to determine the extent to which early experience may or may not have influenced the students' choice of physical education as a career. Data was collected concerning the following variables: 1) number of students whose shools had elementary-level physical education specialists, as opposed to those that had a regular classroom teacher doubling as a physical education instructor; 2) the amount of time allotted to physical education activities; 3) teaching methods used by the students' instructors; 4) the equipment and facilities which were available; 5) the types of activities; and 6) the attitudes and perceptions education majors harbored regarding their elementary physical education experiences in general. A summary of research findings is included. (LH)

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AN INVESTIGATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION EXPERIENCES OF SELECTED ENTERING EDUCATION MAJORS

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by
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A paper presented at the annual NMAHPER conference
at Silver City, New Mexico
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Section 1

INTRODUCTION

A brief, written evaluation of elementary physical education experiences was submitted by 418 entering education majors as the first course requirement for P. Ed. 319 (physical education in the elementary school) as directed by Dr. Nicolass Moolenijzer at the University of New Mexico. The only instruction given students was to briefly evaluate their elementary school physical education experiences. The general purpose here is to investigate these evaluations over a seven year time span (1971-75, 77-78).

The following seven sections represent information retrieval concerning: 1) number of students having elementary physical education specialists, 2) physical education time allotment, 3) teaching methods, 4) available facilities and equipment, 5) types of activities employed in the program, 6) miscellaneous attitudes and perceptions pertaining to their elementary physical education experiences, and 7) a unification summary which solidifies important findings.

Section 2

SPECIALIST - NO SPECIALIST

A numerical tabulation was compiled indicating whether or not a student had an elementary school physical education specialist. These results are tabulated in Table 1 and graphically represented in Figure 1. For the purpose of this paper, a specialist refers to an individual (not the classroom teacher) that assures responsibility for only the physical education program.

The year of response listed in the left hand column of Table 1 refers to the year in which college sophomores, juniors or seniors (majoring in P.E. or elementary education at the University of New Mexico) responded to an evaluation of their elementary school physical education experiences. Assuming that the majority of respondents entered the university following their senior year in high school, the time span between the year they entered elementary school and the year of response entered on Table 1 would be approximately fifteen years. For example, a physical education or elementary education major evaluating their elementary school physical education experience in 1978 would have attended elementary school during the approximate time span from 1963 to 1969. Just as the physical education major responding in 1971 would have attended elementary school during the approximate time span from 1956 to 1962. A minimal

number of respondents (8 of the 418) had indicated that their elementary education took place in the late 1930's, 1940's or early 1950's.

The graphic representation of the percentages indicate a steady increase in the percentage of elementary school physical education specialists from 1971 to 1978. The increase of specialists then obviously has accounted for the decrease in no-specialists during the same time span.

The greatest percentage of increase and decrease of specialists (1976) is due to no responses being submitted in that year which if there were, the increase probably would not have been as great. The only time there was a decrease in the percentage of specialists was from 1974-75. In 1974, 37.9% of the respondents reported specialists while in 1975 only 30.9% reported specialists. The steady increase in percentage of specialists through 1974 was probably due to the renewed emphasis on physical fitness during President Kennedy's administration. In 1975 the decrease of 7% may have been due to a "cooling off" period after the initial impact of the Kennedy administration.

A more indepth historical review of the early and mid-sixties is necessary to provide a better understanding as to why there has been a steady increase in elementary physical education specialists (excepting 1975).

TABLE 1. Percent of Specialists as Compared to no Specialists

Year of Response	No. Havings Specialists	% of Total Responses	No. Having No Specialists	% of Total Responses	Total No. of Responses
1978	13	50%	13	50%	26
1977	10	47.6%	11	52.4%	21
1975	17	30.9%	38	69.1%	55
1974	61	37.9%	103	62.1%	164
1973	19	26%	54	74%	73
1972	10	23.3%	33	76.7%	43
1971	7	19.5%	29	80.5%	36
TOTAL	137	32.8%	281	67.2%	418

Note: 127 of 281 respondents claiming no physical education specialist received no physical education time allotment (other than recess), indicating that 154 respondents did receive an allotted time for physical education with a classroom teacher.

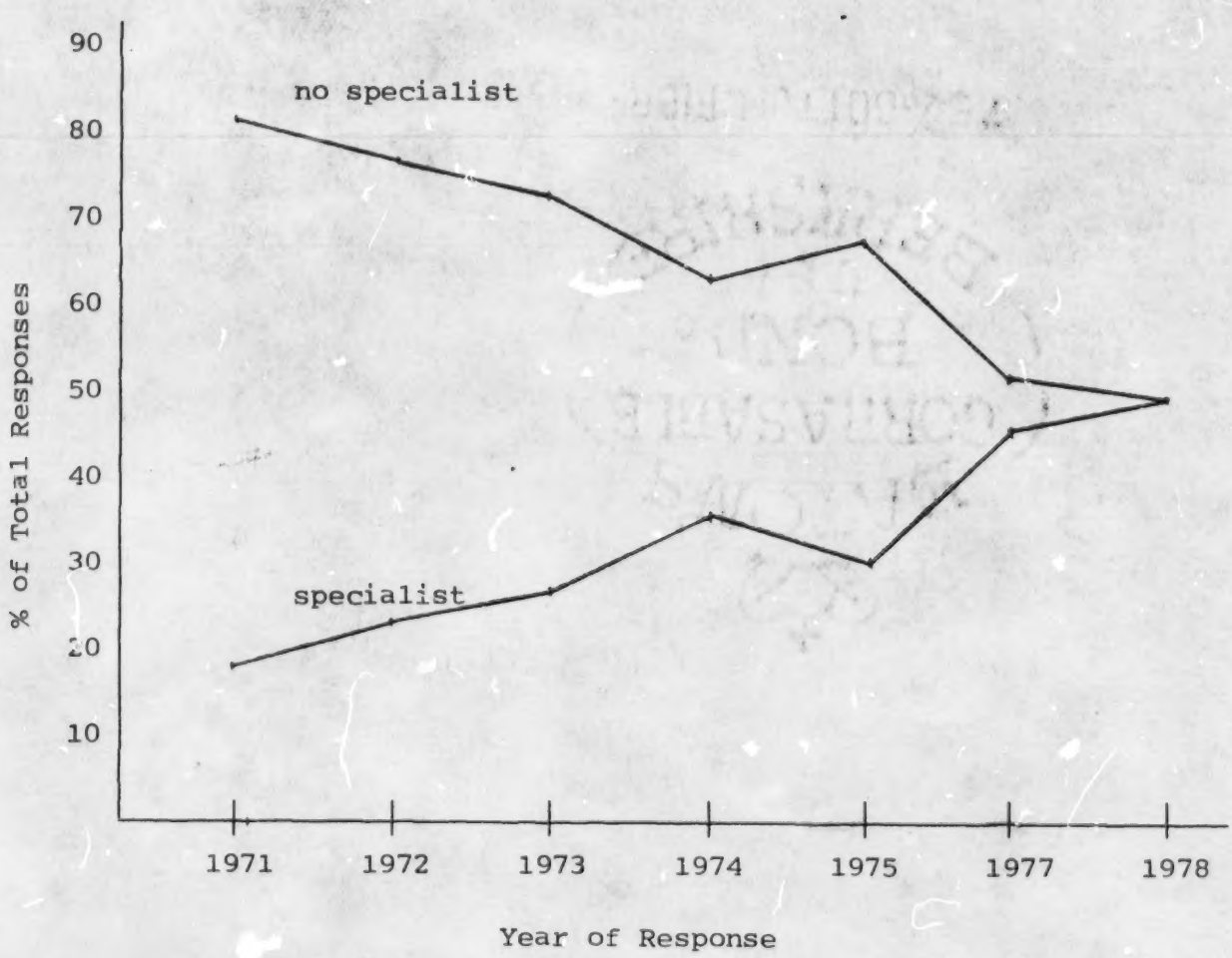

Figure 1. A graphic representation of the percent of Specialist as compared to no Specialist.

Section 3

TIME ALLOTMENT

Only 93 of 418 students offered responses concerning time allotment. This is 22.2% of the total which may not be sufficient to make speculations concerning time allotment. However, the table below offers times per week students met for physical education in the elementary school. These data suggest only that students met for physical education, not necessarily with a specialist, not including recess time. The time allotted for each meeting ranged from 20 minutes to one hour.

TABLE 2. Time allotments per week.

Year of Response	Times per Week 1	2	3	4	5	Total Responses
1978	3	0	0	0	1	4
1977	2	3	0	0	5	10
1975	4	3	4	0	4	15
1974	11	10	5	1	1	28
1973	4	8	2	1	3	18
1972	5	3	0	0	2	10
1971	3	3	1	0	1	8
Total Responses Times/Wk	32	30	12	2	17	93

Of the 93 respondents, 66.5% met only once or twice per week, whereas 33.5% met three, four or five times per week.

Section 4

TEACHING METHODS

Only 40 (9.6%) of the 418 total respondents offered information concerning teaching methods or techniques. Therefore, to evaluate trends in teaching methodology is probably inappropriate. The most frequently mentioned teaching methods and techniques were: separation of boy-girl physical education activities, and a progression of activities according to grade level and coeducational activities. Other methods and techniques mentioned infrequently concerned lead-up activities, roll call, pass-fail grading, learning rules of games, history of sports, classroom competitions, demonstration of skills, instructor observation, integration of activities with classroom subjects and skill testing. Of the 40 responses, fifteen stated that boys and girls were separated during their elementary school physical education experiences, seven stated that there was a progression of activities from year to year, and seven stated that they were involved in a coeducational physical education experience. It is interesting to note that of the respondents indicating boys and girls in separate activities versus coeducational activities, the boys and girls being separated for activity outnumber coeducational activity more than two to one.

Section 5

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Forty-seven respondents offered information concerning facilities and equipment accessable to them in elementary school. This is also an inadequate number of responses to elicit judgment and evaluate trends concerning physical education facilities in elementary schools.

While accumulating data pertaining to elementary physical education facilities, of which there were 41 responses, 20 respondents claimed access to a gymnasium, 14 had access to a cafeteria or multi-purpose room, five stated they had no indoor facility, and two had access to a swimming pool. There was little response concerning outdoor facilities. Further inquiry pertaining to geographical location, socioeconomic status and climatic conditions of the students elementary school area may supply answers as to why some indoor facilities were better than others and why the outdoor facilities were infrequently mentioned.

There was little response concerning the availability of equipment. Of those who did respond, equipment such as climbing ropes, jump ropes, mats, trampolines, nets, balls, gloves, apparatus, bats, dance records, and track equipment were mentioned.

Section 6

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

As evaluations and conclusions are drawn from the data presented in this Section of the investigation, the reader should remember that the respondent (student) must rely on recall of approximately 9-15 years or even longer in some instances, suggesting that all responses may not be totally accurate. Also students may only have mentioned the activities which had the greatest impression on them or activities they were best at. More over, respondents may have mentioned the activities they disliked the most, these activities standing out foremost in their memories.

Included here are responses offered by students pertaining to games, sports, dance, tumbling and apparatus, aquatic activities and extra class activities (recess, noontime, play day, sport or field days, intramurals, inter-school activities) which they participated in during their elementary school years. There were 312 students that offered responses concerning the types of activities in which they participated while in elementary school.

There were 34 different types of activities mentioned, comprising a total of 915 activities (see Table 4). The activities most frequently mentioned, the frequency of each activity mentioned, and the percent of the total number of

activities mentioned (915) are shown in the following table.

TABLE 3. The frequency that particular activities were offered and/or participated in by students when they were in elementary school.

	Activity	Frequency	% of Total Activities (915)
1.	Softball or Baseball	100	10.9
2.	Games	75	8.2
3.	Basketball	68	7.4
4.	Stunts and Tumbling	58	6.3
5.	Exercises or Calisthenics	57	6.2
6.	Rhythms and Dance	54	5.9
7.	Kickball	49	5.4
8.	Volleyball	43	4.7
9.	Track and Field	38	4.2
10.	Relays	35	3.8

In each year of response, softball or baseball activities were most frequently mentioned. Activities such as badminton, deck tennis, field and floor hockey, golf, handball, health and safety, interschool competition, parachute activities, ping-pong, speedball, snow-skiing, and wrestling were mentioned five times or less of the total activities (915) mentioned. Excluding recess activities, (127 responses), there were 491 responses indicating team or group activities and 297 responses indicating individual or dual activities. Therefore, 62% of the activities mentioned were group or team in nature while 38% were individual or dual.

Although recess activities were included as part of the total activities mentioned, the frequency of response (127) represents the number of students that listed recess as their only source of activity. Therefore, of the 312 students responding to the types of activities pursued through a special physical education activity time, 127, or 41%, received no

no instruction in activities through physical education whatsoever. It should also be noted that many students indicated having recess in addition to supervised physical education activities, although this was not mentioned in Table 4. It is probably safe to say, therefore, that all the respondents received recess when they were in elementary school.

TABLE 4. Frequency of activity with percent of each activity compared to the total number of responses.

Year of Response	Frequency and % of Total	Apparatus	Badminton	Basketball	Deck Tennis	Dodgeball	Exercises Calisthenics	Fitness Testing	Field Hockey and Floor Hockey	Football	Games	Golf	Handball	Health and Safety	Interschool Competition	Intramurals	Jump Rope	Kickball	Movement Educ.	Parachute Act.
1978	#	1	0	5	0	1	7	0	0	3	5	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	1	1
	%	1.2	0	5.7	0	1.2	8.0	0	0	3.4	5.7	0	0	0	0	1.2	1.2	3.4	1.2	1.2
1977	#	0	1	9	0	5	3	2	0	4	3	0	0	1	0	3	1	5	0	0
	%	0	1.3	11.7	0	6.5	3.9	2.6	0	5.2	3.9	0	0	1.3	0	3.9	1.3	6.5	0	0
1975	#	0	0	11	1	9	4	4	1	5	13	0	0	2	2	5	3	9	3	0
	%	0	0	7.4	.07	6.1	2.7	2.7	.07	3.4	8.8	0	0	1.4	1.4	3.4	2.0	6.1	2.0	0
1974	#	1	0	21	0	10	31	10	1	9	36	0	1	1	2	6	2	22	5	0
	%	.03	0	5.7	0	2.7	8.4	2.7	.03	2.5	9.8	0	.03	.03	.05	1.6	.05	6.0	1.4	0
1973	#	2	1	12	0	2	6	3	1	4	10	1	[illegible]	1	0	2	0	6	0	0
	%	1.5	.08	9.2	0	1.5	4.6	2.3	.08	3.1	7.7	.08	0	.08	0	1.5	0	4.6	0	0
1972	#	1	0	3	0	1	3	2	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
	%	2.3	0	7.0	0	2.3	7.0	4.7	0	0	9.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.3	2.3	0
1971	#	1	0	7	0	2	3	2	0	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
	%	1.6	0	11.1	0	3.2	4.8	3.2	0	4.8	6.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.8	0	0
Totals for each Act.	#	6	2	68	1	30	57	23	3	28	75	1	1	5	4	17	7	49	10	1
	%	.07	.02	7.4	.01	3.3	6.2	2.5	.03	3.1	8.2	.01	.01	.05	.04	1.9	.08	5.4	2.0	.01

NOTE: Games include activities such as red rover, cat and mouse, tagging games, etc.

Ping Pong	Recess Activities	Relays	Rhythms and Dance	Soccer	Softball/Baseball	Stunts & Tumbling	Speedball	Snow Skiing	Swimming	Sports Day, Field Day or Play Day	Tetherball	Track & Field	Volleyball	Wrestling	Total Responses	Activities Most Frequently Mentioned	% of Total (915)	Frequency
0	3	4	8	2	10	9	1	0	1	5	1	6	6	0	87	Softball or Baseball	10.9	100
0	3.4	4.6	9.2	2.3	11.5	10.3	1.2	0	1.2	5.7	1.2	6.9	6.9	0		Games	8.2	75
0	1	3	4	2	9	8	0	0	0	3	0	7	3	0	77	Basketball	7.4	68
0	1.3	3.9	5.2	2.6	11.7	10.4	0	0	0	3.9	0	9.1	3.9	0		Stunts & Tumbling	6.3	58
3	16	7	6	6	17	7	0	0	0	2	3	1	7	1	148	Exercises or Calisthenics	6.2	57
2.0	10.8	4.7	4.1	4.1	11.5	4.7	0	0	0	1.4	2.0	.07	4.7	.07		Rhythms and Dance	5.9	54
1	53	14	23	4	37	22	1	1	4	8	6	18	16	0	367	Kickball	5.4	49
.03	14.4	3.8	6.3	1.1	10.1	6.0	.03	.03	1.1	2.2	1.6	4.9	4.4	0		Volleyball	4.7	43
0	26	5	9	2	14	8	0	0	1	1	2	3	7	1	130	Track & Field	4.2	38
0	20.0	3.8	6.9	1.5	10.8	6.2	0	0	.08	.08	1.5	2.3	5.4	.08		Relays	3.8	35
0	13	1	1	0	3	1	0	0	1	2	0	2	3	0	43			
0	30.2	2.3	2.3	0	7.0	2.3	0	0	2.3	4.7	0	4.7	7.0	0				
0	15	1	3	2	10	3	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	63			
0	23.8	1.6	4.8	3.2	15.9	4.8	0	0	0	0	3.2	1.6	1.6	0				
4	127	35	54	18	100	58	2	1	7	21	14	38	43	2	915	TOTAL # of Activities Mentioned		
.04	13.9	3.8	5.9	2.0	10.9	6.3	.02	.01	.08	2.3	1.5	4.2	4.7	.02				

Section 7

MISCELLANEOUS PERCEPTIONS

This section includes personal comments and perceptions which reflect either positive or negative feelings about the quality of elementary physical education programs. Of the 418 total respondents in the survey, 229 offered statements pertaining to the quality of the program they received.

The following responses which fall under the category of miscellaneous perceptions are listed below in chronological order beginning in 1971. They are individual perceptions.

1971

1. My instructors embarrassed the children with poor coordination and those who were overweight.

2. The atmosphere of the school was a strict one, and not only was a child deprived of instruction in the accruing of physical skills and strength, but he was lucky not having his limbs atrophy due to lack of use.

3. P.E. taught us how to work as a cooperative group and how to be leaders and followers.

4. I feel that the competitive point of view was stressed too much and that "freedom of movement" should have been the primary concern.

5. I was not a very active child, because of this and added to the fact I was not in any specific P.E. program, I continued to remain very inactive.

6. In elementary and junior high years there was no building of skills, or transfer of skills from one year to another. This became rather boring after a while and a lot of students lost interest.

7. I do feel strongly that skills should be taught in the elementary schools, so children will have a background and can learn much faster.

8. With P.E. everyday, everyone had to have their work done to satisfactory condition to be able to participate for that day.

9. I was exposed to a better than average program because I was a boy. The girls in my class definitely were at a disadvanatage because of the lack of a woman professional to give them special attention.

10. It was more like a play period than a time to learn.

11. If the P.E. program had been better planned and supervised, I think I would have learned to appreciate and enjoy sports at an earlier age.

12. During P.E. class instead of playing many games to keep us interested, we played the same one for weeks. I feel this is due to lack of organization and most of all a leader who is qualified and interested.

13. If I had proper instructions, I would have appreciated P.E. more than I did.

14. To me, P.E. was just a few minutes of fun twice a week during school; just another recess.

15. Instructors many times placed winning above trying. Only those who won were rewarded. This made winning more important than learning and having a good time.

16. My P.E. teacher was fair which I feel is a most important quality in any teacher. He did not criticize if you could not do an activity as well as the others, but told you to keep trying and he would help you. I feel that with more planning and creativity my experiences in P.E. could have been more of a learning experience.

17. So much effort was spent trying to do the right thing at the right time that relaxed and natural movements were impossible. P.E. was also considered more important for the boys than the girls.

18. During my elementary years there was no organization or professional guidance in P.E.

19. We learned the values and necessities of fair play and good sportsmanship, the excitement of competition, the comradeship of teams and the musts of cooperative efforts.

20. The lack of P.E. has deprived parochial school children of a very important part of growing up.

1972

21. The experiences of which I remember of P.E. in elementary school were quite pleasing to me. As I remember, we were shown and were able to perform in many different activities and became proficient in most.

22. Our regular teacher also was in charge of our P.E. classes and she didn't know the first thing about the rules, regulations and fundamentals of anything we were doing.

23. I can only conclude that P.E. was a wasteful class period, except for its recreational value, which I enjoyed.

24. I can't remember a teacher ever being involved in the P.E. program.

25. All I can remember is the coach saying it was a free period and we could do anything we wanted. Then I remember watching him sit on a swing and there he'd spend the rest of the time unless trouble arose and he was really needed.

26. P.E. at that time was very poorly planned if it was planned at all.

27. Sports, games, exercises, movements, skills, and safety should all be an integrated part of P.E. rather than emphasis on only a single aspect.

28. Looking on some of the excellent programs for children today, I feel that I was somewhat cheated in a well rounded P.E. program.

29. My experience with P.E. has been one of frustration and repetition. I became very frustrated with P.E. because everything was so patented, you weren't allowed to express yourself as an individual.

30. Children were not required nor actively encouraged to participate in any physical activity.

31. We should have had nutrition and health incorporated with the activities.

32. My P.E. instructors only paid attention to the best athletes in our class. I also did not like P.E. in elementary school because we were given a limited choice of activities to participate in.

33. While having fun, unknown to us, we were learning coordination and strengthening our bodies.

34. My P.E. didn't take into account for individual differences, P.E. was not integrated into the curriculum.

35. The main complaint I must make is that fifteen minutes, one day a week simply will not satisfy the physical or mental needs of any growing child.

36. Above everyone stood the "Physical Educator" who paid more attention to his or her intermediate and advanced students and left the poor beginning students in a corner all by themselves.

1973

37. It is clear to me now that this lack of guidance over my physical faculties during the chief growing years is responsible for several nagging fears which cause me to avoid situations that ought to be routinely considered enjoyable.

38. An attitude was never developed about how good physical activity is for all of us.

39. There was an ignorance towards elementary P.E. by the administration, teachers, parents, and people in general.

40. I would evaluate my elementary school P.E. experience as very limited for such a crucial time of growth and development.

41. My memory seems to be lacking on this subject, but maybe what's lacking was the physical education program itself.

42. It wasn't until my junior high days that P.E. was especially interesting.

43. I found my P.E. classes as being discriminating towards the students who couldn't perform as well as others. I feel this makes those children very uninterested in P.E., which shows up in later life.

44. Our instruction was what you or another kid had picked up from watching a sporting event on t.v.

45. For six years I never experienced any type of organized competitive games or movement fundamentals, only six years of roll call and - - - running around the backstop.

46. The program that resulted in a good experience had a creative, learning and motivating structure. The program I had which resulted in a poor program was geared to the students that excelled in athletics. Those who didn't were grouped together and ignored. The instructor was rigid and uncreative.

47. One thing I learned in P.E. was competition, not only among fellow students but competition against myself. Another thing taught to us was team playing and sportsmanship.

48. We were never told why we were doing these things or how our bodies worked to accomplish these acts. I think it could have been a better learning experience if this had been done.

49. Elementary P.E. memories are a nightmare to me. I can only remember a collage of relay races, long-jump contests and softball games.

50. The larger and more skilled kids received more attention from the coach and the small ones, of which I was one. became turned off and eventually disliked P.E.

51. Overall, I would consider my P.E. program to be mainly sports-oriented and geared towards the well-coordinated with not much help for the non-coordinated.

52. Such little importance was placed on P.E. that some teachers used the time as a detention period for unruly children or as study time for slower students.

53. My elementary P.E. experiences were not very extensive, but very enjoyable.

54. Most of all that teacher made everything fun for everybody without making anyone feel stupid.

55. My program was composed of diversed activities which allowed the participating youth to develop not only a healthy relationship with others in sports activities, but also to develop a sincere appreciation for a continuing involvement in physical education.

56. I found P.E. defined as: instruction in the development and care of the body. From this definition I have decided that I had very little P.E. in my elementary school.

57. From grade one through six I cannot recall receiving any instruction or organized supervision in P.E. We were just turned out to recess like a herd of animals.

58. There was almost no chance for improvement because we never played the same game long enough.

59. P.E. in my elementary school was an extremely neglected area.

60. I do not recall developing my knowledge or skills in P.E. during the time I attended the elementary schools.

1974

61. Although many activities were provided, not everyone was required to participate. Too many elementary school children have been robbed not only of their P.E. but even more, of a well rounded life.

62. The individual needs of each child were not taken into account, nor were freedom of movement, expression, or creative activity encouraged. Competitiveness was introduced too early with such sports as soccer and kickball being dominant and therefore the males and only the skillful males experiencing the most benefit and pleasure.

63. The parents knew little girls were suppose to be ladies and physical exercise was for the boys. So as I look back I find out how the teachers and parents can affect the physical education programs.

64. I must say that I enjoyed P.E. despite my being incomfortable at times. I feel that I benefited from it. I also feel it should be taught everyday.

65. Looking back, I regret not having a concerned structured experience improving my skills and encouraging my pleasure in movement activities.

66. My P.E. teacher in elementary school was genuinely interested in his students and in involving them in as much physical activity as was possible.

67. My elementary school P.E. program was nothing more than a ball and bat.

68. Although I did not have an instructor in physical education I received my physical education through integrated channels.

69. These teachers taught me the true way of enjoying P.E. and keeping the right physical shape which enabled me to go on to enjoy P.E. in junior high and high school and to really enjoy it.

70. My P.E. teachers all through elementary school were men and it seemed to me that they encouraged the boys more than the girls. They appeared to have the attitude of "Well, I'll keep the girls busy and really get down to business with the boys."

71. The elementary school P.E. was not as good as it should have been because we did not have the proper equipment; there was too much competition in the early grades; and there were not enough low organized games in the early grades.

72. I honestly think that one of the purposes of elementary school was to teach the child that P.E. was not necessary. I feel this because of the limitations and attitudes concerning P.E. in the elementary schools I was associated with.

73. I can tell you that my P.E. experiences in elementary school were repulsive. There was a definite lack of organization.

74. The teacher just carried out the publics opinion of what a P.E. teacher does, a man who throws out a ball and sometimes supervises the play ground.

75. I enjoyed P.E. immensely as it allowed me to relieve alot of tension held within as I was growing up.

76. I think probably that P.E. was not at all related to my other school experiences as a part of growth and that it took on a narrow meaning--namely, sports and/or physical fitness exercises. I would rate my physical education experiences very poorly.

77. My elementary school P.E. program was non-existant.

78. P.E. programs in elementary school when I attended were very poor if they existed at all.

79. We were told recess had nothing to do with P.E., it was just time to play, P.E. would come in junior high school.

80. Though facilities were available for a good P.E. program, the lack of interest toward this field made them useless.

81. For the children who were uninterested in P.E. they stood aside and watched, never being involved with any moving activity at all. These children need some type of motivation and had none.

82. The classroom teacher led us to believe that being physically fit and mentally fit were two separate things and if it had been up to them, I think we'd have skipped P.E. all together.

83. All in all my elementary P.E. program was time off from boring school work.

84. The aspects of my elementary school P.E. that I remember best are that P.E. occurred very infrequently, the activities were very disorganized and it held a very low priority. The P.E. program I was involved in was a fairly worthless program which gave the students no feeling for the importance of P.E. and no respect for it.

85. There seemed to be much emphasis on winning and competition, keeping the low-achiever from accomplishing.

86. Lack of movement and constant ridicule were primarily the make up of my P.E. in elementary school.

87. In judging my own P.E. experience I feel I was short changed somewhere along the line. I remember I always felt terrible because I couldn't throw a ball, but no one wanted to show me how. I never learned until high school.

88. I fear was instilled in us at an early age that competition was very important.

89. As I remember, the teacher more or less just threw the ball out to us and then we were on our own for an hour.

90. It seems that we did do many running and ball activities, but those who were slower or less coordinated were actually eliminated first or did not participate at all.

91. I was unconscience of my athletic abilities until college, simply because my early educational experiences did not provide me the proper type of re-enforcement to encourage my total development.

92. I feel that my elementary P.E. was more than adequate and served to be a tool for me in my years to come.

93. The importance of P.E. and physical fitness was never stressed.

94. My evaluation of my elementary school P.E. experiences is that they were inadequate and repressive.

95. I don't recall anyone ever saying that I must do certain things because it would be beneficial for body growth and development.

96. The only movement I ever achieved was the kind that you received punishment for because of disrupting the class (parochial).

97. The P.E. instructor was a man whose attention was always centered around the boys. The girls often felt left out. Because of the limited time and long explanations, few of us ever got an opportunity to perform the actual activity, game, or skill.

98. Often times running and calisthenics were used as punishment which turned off many students to P.E.

99. P.E. definitely had a positive affect on me because my interest and potential in physical education has its roots in my elementary years.

100. I can see that many students were left out because different grade levels were participating and the instructor was unable to give children proper attention.

101. I feel that my P.E. experience was lacking. It did not seem to meet my needs.

102. Most of the schools that I attended were concerned with the academic program rather than combining the physical and academic together.

103. The P.E. program was not pressure oriented, therefore, an enjoyable class.

104. Nobody ever explained why we were learning such games.

105. The only suggestion I could make is that the coach could have explained why we were doing something instead of saying "do it".

106. Many of my classmates now, have not ever liked P.E. because of their elementary school experience.

107. P.E. was looked upon as merely exercise and at that time most people thought children would get plenty of exercise walking to and from school and doing the chores. P.E. was confused with competitive athletics, tournaments, and heavy muscular movements.

108. If the P.E. skills taught today existed when I was in elementary school, the rest of the work in class might have been easier to grasp.

109. I realize that my elementary school P.E. experiences were rare and that I was fortunate to attend a school that could give me such an excellent program.

110. I had no program of directed physical activities in accordance with my needs, abilities and limitations.

111. I wish I could have had the opportunity and privilege of having a regular P.E. program in my elementary school days.

112. At the time I went to elementary school I didn't know anything about physical education.

113. I suppose back then our instructors didn't really know the importance of physical education.

114. I don't think we had enough exercise in my elementary days.

115. In a sense all our modern equipment at our school today has limited our physical movement.

116. My evaluation in elementary P.E. was quite a good thing to remember.

117. Because of restricted physical activity we more or less have become afraid of expressing ourselves in front of a group.

118. Recess was the best thing about going to school.

119. I don't think those teachers knew much about P.E., or knew how important P.E. was to elementary children.

120. There was nothing I could remember doing which would pertain to physical education except for the little recess time we had.

121. In my elementary years, there seemed to be no such thing as P.E. No teacher I had ever mentioned anything about physical movement.

122. No one ever mentioned the importance of a well developed body or mind or that exercise of different kinds would help your body to function better.

123. I never heard of P.E. until I got into high school.

124. I remember the teacher would say academics studies were more important than physical education. Teachers had a negative attitude toward physical education.

125. The P.E. I've experienced during my elementary school years were so unorganized that to this day I still don't know what the words "physical education" really stands for. I guess you have to know the meaning of P.E. in order to enjoy it.

126. The Bureau school never explained the meaning of physical education, what it stood for, or what it supposedly had done for the children (Indian).

127. I think P.E. is far more advanced today than what they called physical education in my elementary years.

128. We had no organized games to play either outdoors or indoors and if we did organize anything it was us who did it.

129. My P.E. instructor was a very enthusiastic and energetic man. He was continually urging us to try all of his planned activities with a "do the best you can" attitude whether we wanted to do that particular activity or not.

130. You ask me to evaluate my elementary school physical education experience--well, all I can come up with is a big zero.

131. But what was consistant throughout elementary school was that if a student wasn't one of the better in team sports, he was left out. P.E., although very competitive at times, seemed to be something that every child looked forward to at one time or another.

132. If one has a bad P.E. teacher, especially in his younger years of P.E. he will be completely turned off to sports or physical education for the most part.

133. To me it seemed that our elementary school physical education teachers taught us good sportsmanship and leadership abilities.

134. Competition and team sports are important, but I could have benefited more if other areas of fitness would have been included. I never learned to enjoy P.E. as a means to become a healthier person. Spectator sports are popular in this country, I feel as if one reason is because of the lack of individual sports taught in the public schools.

135. My evaluation of my own P.E. is null.

136. Overall, our physical education lacked variety. In the fall one could be sure of exercises and volleyball; in winter, tumbling and in spring, softball and track.

137. In reviewing the entire program I realized that it was geared only to those that were athletic, while the remainder of the students suffered.

138. If winning did not play such a large segment in physical education I believe it would be more beneficial to all of the students.

139. In summation, my physical education experiences were far from being satisfactory.

140. I learned what competition was and how to compete. I learned the meaning of sportsmanship and cooperation.

141. Physical education game me a better understanding of sportsmanship---the joys of winning as well as accepting the losing and still having a good time.

142. I feel that my experience in elementary physical education classes shows that the scope of activities could have been enlarged tremondously by even a small amount of creativity on the part of the instructor.

143. Physical education was the most humiliating experience of my entire elementary school career. It was no wonder that one could easily lose self-confidence if nobody wanted you on their relay team after the coach announced to the class that it had just taken you two minutes to run 100 yards. One real striking memory is that if a child misbehaved in PE for punishment he was required to do some overt physical activity, such as 100 push ups or two laps around the entire playground. This to me is the ultimate contradiction of teaching. A child is bound to get the wrong impression of what he is learning when what he

has learned is used against him instead of in his favor. It is as if physical movement is something to make you suffer not feel good.

144. I find it far to easy to remember the lack of physical experiences. In fact, to a person like myself it was sort of a starvation.

145. I would have to admit this was a pretty poor program--lots of days I imagine my friends and I would just sit and talk in the shade, without engaging in any activity of a physical nature.

146. Since only 5th and 6th were allowed to have P.E., I hope I can learn some skills to possibly keep this unfortunate occurance from happening again.

147. Due to the infrequency of engaging in physical education activity, I feel I was denied much of the social interaction and experience that I should have had.

148. To evaluate my own elementary school physical education experience, I can really say it was rather poor.

149. As a result of my P.E. experience in elementary school, I never go through a semester without taking a P.E. class since I feel I missed so much of it in my grade school years.

150. I would of rather stayed in the classroom doing homework or some kind of work, than going to P.E.

151. I found P.E. to be a very relaxing and enjoyable course.

152. The experiences I had in elementary school P.E. were just worthless to me as an individual.

153. As a result of poor organization and sometimes no recreation provided at all, there were many fights. I would evaluate my elementary school P.E. to be poor.

154. As a product of the Albuquerque Public School system and their elementary P.E. program in which I was a part of, its amazing that I'm fit enough to write this paper. Our P.E. instructor was a man who had no idea what physical fitness was about. He had no plan prior to the class. We often just walked around for the half hour we had and threw rocks at each other.

155. I never viewed P.E. as another subject because it wasn't presented in this manner. As a girl, I enjoyed learning the different dances but resented not being allowed to try other types of recreation.

156. One third of the time spent in organized P.E. classes was in lining up the class to get to and from the gym. Another portion of our precious time was spent in choosing teams or making a perfect circle. Half the remaining time was engaged in learning rules for the game to be played.

157. I don't remember enjoying my P.E. classes very much as it was usually the same thing over and over again.

1975

158. There was little variety, little supervision, little competition, and no systematic effort to increase our fitness.

159. My physical education in elementary school would be better named play period.

160. I feel that I can safely say that almost all the P.E. received in elementary school that I was involved in was due to my own organization.

161. I did well in physical education because my parents always stressed it at home.

162. It was also good that the teacher did not stress competition with others so much as he stressed competition with yourself.

163. I feel that the P.E. program at our grade school was a very big part in motivating the kids.

164. I do remember we were always busy and all interested in our activities.

165. P.E. was nothing more than recess had been.

166. P.E. must not have been too exciting because it took awhile to remember it at all.

167. It was very boring to have straight academics for six years with no organized physical activity. Everything was played in a hap-hazard manner and we were very often wrong on rules of different games.

168. I don't think my physical education experience was anywhere near perfect.

169. As was said in class, the P.E. program was pretty much of a joke, and was never thought of as being an educational course. The teachers taught education, whereas the coach taught nothing.

170. Our school system employed the "coach" and he was more interested in the boys for future athletes than in the rest of the class. I felt and still do feel a great deal of animosity toward our coach for not allowing for variations in our developments and including more individual coordinate skills where we could be taught to do things for our own appreciation and not the mockery of the class.

171. I also liked my physical education teacher very much and he made an impression on me that I will never forget when dealing with sports.

172. P.E. was stripped of its right to proudly exhibit itself among the other subject areas.

173. I think this program worked well for me and it did tend to develop basic movements which I think were important.

174. In retrospect, little emphasis was placed on individual activities.

175. Poor is perhaps the most appropriate word to describe my physical education experience at the elementary level.

176. It seemed like every individual did what they wanted to do; girls huddled up in a corner of a building either giggling or just playing jacks, the boys played basketball or chased the girls. In my elementary school days I didn't know the term "physical education."

177. I can honestly say that I got more physical activity cheerleading than any other time in my elementary years.

178. It was a program I consider to be integrated and highly beneficial.

179. I remember very distinctly the old mode of education stressing that academic education and physical education were two separate forms.

180. My early P.E. training must have been very wrong, because I was convinced I hated athletics until long after I started college.

181. For myself and a few other outcasts, P.E. was a forced freedom from the classroom.

182. The one rule that I disliked was that when football season came, the boys played and the girls stood on the sidelines and cheered.

183. My teachers hung P.E. in front of me and others, like a carrot in front of an "ass", "If you work hard and be a good boy some day you'll have P.E." The coach also expected performance and when he gave me a hopeless look or shape word, I was crushed. Soon, myself, and others who didn't perform well enough got pushed into the spectator role.

184. If one was lucky enough to be issued some playground equipment or convince friends to let you play, you could play baseball, tetherball or basketball.

185. I always became very impatient because she talked for half of the period and then just a few of us got the chance to participate because there were so many of us in that huge circle.

186. Boys games and sports activities were encouraged at an early age. Girls were expected to learn to cook and sew and to participate in any kind of music, reading and writing activity.

187. My instructor concerned herself more with whether we had our sneakers than with what we were to do after we had them on. There was alwys the assumption that everyone already knew how to throw or catch a ball correctly.

188. The P.E. experiences at the elementary school that I attended were marked by the almost complete lack of physical activity.

189. By the time I reached third grade things seemed to be improving--they had started a boys basketball team.

190. I feel that my teachers did the best they could with the knowledge and equipment that was available to them at that time.

191. We only did what we were told without any questions. If one asked a question, he was confronted with discipline. As a result of disciplinary action and submission, I never knew why I was doing the exercise.

192. There was never really any difference in programs from first through sixth grade.

193. I always wondered why there was enough teachers to have music but not enough for P.E. Our teachers would say, "This is a school for learning your essentials for your future and P.E. is not an essential."

194. The P.E. program was very weak but I loved it.

195. Perhaps my P.E. instructors could have been more imaginative with their programs and more helpful when I needed personal attention and help.

196. I had a male P.E. teacher. He made all of us girls cry because he was constantly barking at us. He changed P.E. from rope jumping and fun to nothing but exercises. He gave half of our class D's because we couldn't do as many sit-ups as he thought we should be able to do. I think the selection of physical education teachers should be carefully screened. They have a big effect on children.

197. They threw the ball out and we carried on from there. One did what they could with what they had.

1977

198. Nothing in school was pointed to the improvement or fulfillment of the physical needs of children.

199. I don't remember the coach ever saying anything to us about bike riding or swimming or camping. I think it would have been good of him to at least tell us these things.

200. I found elementary P.E. a place to practice basic skills and improve what little skill I had already achieved.

201. "Coach" gave special attention to those more competitive children.

202. In P.E. we never knew why we were doing an activity or what the purpose of it was. I think P.E. in elementary school was a big farce.

203. I would evaluate my P.E. experiences in elementary school as very poor. In fact, I would say that by todays standards and what children are exposed to today as P.E., I had nothing that would even begin to compare with what is available to children today.

204. My teacher was fair and interested. Thus, all those he taught were interested.

205. Looking back now, I can say that my enjoyment of sports activities in elementary school set a groundwork for my desire to participate actively in certain sports today. Our "coach" seemed especially encouraging.

206. Every experience I had in physical activity I loved. I looked forward eagerly to our brief sessions.

207. Since our teacher did little to inspire confidence, being let down was not much of a let down.

208. Altogether I would have to say my elementary physical education wasn't very good.

209. I do not ever recall any teacher talking about the need and importance of exercise and the benefits derived from it.

210. The school was limited in its P.E. because of funds, personnel and adequate space. Emphasis was not on physical education but, on the mind and soul. (parochial school)

211. Because funds were lacking, our P.E. was not what it should have been. I never remember being taught the rules, we made them up as we went along. Our teacher spent most of his time working with the boys. (parochial school)

1978

212. P.E. was considered a class where you were expected to have fun but not expected to learn anything.

213. Physical education in my elementary school was a joke.

214. Most important experiences developed through P.E. for me were team effort, competitiveness and physical coordination.

215. I feel very strongly that if a person in their lifetime wants to enjoy physical activity it must start at the elementary level and a good elementary P.E. teacher is essential.

216. We did not have a variety of activities so eventually we got bored.

217. I feel elementary teachers integrated P.E. into the school program more closely than do elementary teachers today.

218. P.E. was stressed as something for fun, not learning.

219. My teachers idea of P.E. was tetherball, twice a day, every day for the entire year.

220. Special recognition and encouragement given to the talented.

221. Highly competitive activities intimidated and frustrated me.

222. Need P.E. in grade school to develop coordination and athletic abilities.

223. P.E. presents a wonderful opportunity to find out about ones self.

224. Full of good times with respect and gratitude toward physical education.

225. Same P.E. instructor for six years provided a consistant background of instruction.

226. Students with lower abilities were ignored while outstanding students were given the opportunities.

227. Learned how to be patient, how to work with others and how to be organized.

228. Learned that friendship helped accomplish teamwork among the students.

229. We got to know each other better than in the regular classroom.

After examining the list of miscellaneous perceptions, the following comments and attitudes were found to be mentioned with some frequency. Listed in frequency from most frequent, to least, these comments and attitudes implied that:

(18) 1. Students learned nothing in physical education--physical education was poor.

(15) 2. There was no real physical education program.

(14) 3. Physical education was just another recess.

(14) 4. The physical education program discriminated against those students who were uncoordinated or not prone to physical activity.

(11) 5. Values and explainations of physical education were never stressed.

(11) 6. Students were cheated by not having a well rounded program--physical education lacked variety.

(10) 7. Physical education taught cooperation, leadership, friendship and sportsmanship.

(9) 8. Most attention and instruction was given to the boys.

(8) 9. There was no chance for self-expression and creativeness.

(7) 10. The program was not well planned and organized.

(7) 11. The instructor placed most emphasis on competition and winning.

(6) 12. Students had an inactive physical education program.

(6) 13. Students had a wide and varied program--a learning experience.

(5) 14. There was not enough time allotted for physical education.

(5) 15. Physical education was a neglected area.

Other comments and attitudes mentioned at least twice

included:

1. There was no motivation and encouragement offered by instructor.

2. The instructor embarrassed the students.

3. The instructor was fair and offered encouragement.

4. Students played the same games for long periods of time.

5. Students could participate in physical education only if their classwork was done.

6. Exercises were used for punishment which turned students off.

7. Physical education allowed the student to relieve tension.

8. There was no integration of other subjects (e.g. reading, math, science, etc.) with physical education.

9. Instructors were not actively involved in the program.

10. Instructors lacked knowledge concerning physical education.

11. Physical education was creative, motivating and a learning experience.

12. Everyone was not required to participate in physical education.

13. Physical education was fun for everybody.

Of the 15 most frequently mentioned comments and attitudes, 13 indicated negative attitudes toward physical education. One hundred nineteen of the 135 responses most frequently mentioned indicated negative attitudes toward physical education. (87% negative responses)

The following table represents in chronological order, the number and percentage of negative versus positive responses concerning student's elementary school physical education experiences.

TABLE 5. Number and percentage of positive versus negative responses.

Year of Response	Responses Negative #	%	Positive #	%
1978	7	39	11	61
1977	9	64	5	36
1975	29	74	10	26
1974	79	82	17	18
1973	20	83	4	17
1972	14	87	2	13
1971	14	82	3	18
TOTALS	172	77	52	23

As indicated in Table 5, 77% of the total responses were negative. This would seem to indicate that elementary school physical education in the late 1950's and 1960's left something to be desired. Through the years of response from 1971 to 1978, there was a steady decrease in negative attitudes toward elementary school physical education.

Section 8

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In Section 2, 137 of 418 total students had an elementary physical education specialist whereas 281 students did not have specialists. 67.2% of the total responses indicated no specialist. Figure 1 indicated a steady increase in elementary physical education specialists from 1971 to 1978 with the exception of 1975. One hundred sixteen or 28% of all the respondents (418) indicated having absolutely no physical education whatsoever.

Sections 3, 4, and 5 offered very limited information concerning time allotment, teaching procedures and facilities and equipment. The number of students responding to these areas are relatively small, however, there were three predominate responses pertaining to these areas:

1. Of 93 total responses, 62 (66.5%) of the students which received alloted time for physical education met once or twice per week.

2. Of 22 total responses, 15 students (70%) stated that boys and girls were separated for physical education activities.

3. Of 41 total responses pertaining to indoor facilities, 20 (50%) claimed access to a gymnasium, 14 (34%) claimed access to a cafeteria or multi-purpose room, 5 or (12%)

had no available indoor facilities, and 2 (4%) claimed access to a swimming pool.

Section 6 dealt with types of activities included in physical education experiences of the students. Of the total activity areas (34) mentioned in Table 4, softball or baseball, games, basketball, stunts and tumbling, exercises or calisthenics, rhythms and dance, kickball, volleyball, track and field, and relays were the most frequently mentioned activities. (These are listed in order of frequency of mention).

Section 7 includes miscellaneous perceptions pertaining to comments and attitudes toward students' elementary school physical education experiences. Responses were labeled as to whether they were positive or negative in nature. Of the 229 total responses indicating personal attitudes and feelings toward elementary physical education, 77% of the total responses were negative. From 1971 to 1978 there was a steady decrease in negative responses.

Section 9

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

After reviewing the data provided by the "Investigation of Elementary School Physical Education Experiences," the following items are suggested:

1. Evaluations of elementary physical education experiences should be continued as a course requirement for PED 319 (Physical Education in the Elementary School). The subsequent information should be compiled or surveyed every five years to provide general information concerning trends and attitudes in elementary physical education.

2. Thorough historical research should be initiated to gain information and a better insight into the causal imputus effecting the development of elementary school physical education. This could be done pertaining to the United States in general or in specific geographical locations.

3. PED 319 students should be required to submit an evaluation of their elementary physical education experiences in the first and final week of the course. Then a comparison could be made after each student has acquired a better concept of what elementary school physical education really encompasses.

4. After each student has submitted their initial evaluation, a questionnaire should be completed concerning

1) the metnod of instruction (specialist, classroom teacher, consulting specialist, etc.), 2) types of activities, both general (dance, rhythms, aquatics, team sports, individual and dual sports, etc.) and specific (softball, golf, basketball, steal the bacon, etc.), 3) teaching methodology (co-educational, skills testing, command style teaching, humanistic teaching, etc.), 4) time allotment (times per week and minutes per class), 5) facilities and equipment available for use (gymnasium, swimming pool, specific types of outdoor facilities, jump ropes, balls, etc.), and 6) how students perceived their physical education experiences (general and specific attitudes and feelings about their physical education experiences). The miscellaneous perceptions or attitudes part of the questionnaire should include the statements (perceptions) listed on pages 31-32, plus any additional perception that would be relevant. These should be stated in question form, eliciting yes or no answers.

It is of the writers belief that periodic follow-ups in the form of surveys such as this be made. Accumulated data from surveys and questionnaires may suggest direction in possible curriculum change and teaching methodology. The summation of evaluations, as in this investigation, could serve as invaluable information initiating the improvement of elementary school physical education in general.